

## **LIFE Group Leader Handout**

November 12, 2017

### **Then Enters Jesus--Storm Stories**

Pastor Mike O'Connor

#### **Scripture--Mark 4:35-41**

35 *On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."*

36 *And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats*

*were with him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so*

*that the boat was already filling. 38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they*

*woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 39 And he awoke*

*and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was*

*a great calm. 40 He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41 And they*

*were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"*

#### **Main Idea--Faith Overcomes Fear; We Are Prone to Have False Expectations about What God Will Do**

##### **False Expectations Illustrated in this Scripture--**

- Time: They may have wanted to sleep rather than sail.
- Fairness: They may have felt that two storms was too many.
- Place: They may have initially been trusting in their ability more than the Christ's authority.
- Timing: They may have felt Jesus was uncaring of their need.

##### **Faith--**

*And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. Hebrews 11:6*

- It is how we please God
- It grows
- It Conquers Fear (all but one)

##### **On that day, when evening had come...**

Whatever chapter in our life we may think we are in, Jesus may have another storm but also another miracle

##### **Application--**

- Are any of these false expectations things that you have believed about God and how He works?

- If an attitude of fear and worry is a disease, and faith is God's antidote, how sick are you? How have you applied God's antidote?

### **Four Ways to Handle Conflict in Your Small Group**

**By Gayla McKinney**

Maybe it's just me but I HATE conflict! One time, my best friend sent me an email with the single word "Conflict" in the subject line. Not only did I not open the email because it made me sick to my stomach, but I didn't talk to her for three days because I couldn't bear the thought of having a difficult conversation. When she finally called to ask what was up I confessed that I couldn't even bring myself to read the email because I didn't want to face a conflict. As it turned out, she was simply trying to tell me she had a conflict with the time we'd set to have lunch.

The reality is that small groups are made up of people and people tend to be difficult at times. That's why we need a Savior! Instead of being overwhelmed by that reality and avoiding small groups like the plague, I've discovered a few tools for both avoiding conflict and dealing with it.

- 1. God's Word must be the foundation.** This doesn't necessarily mean that we are only studying Scripture when we meet, but it does mean that we are incorporating Scripture any and every time we are together. Sometimes, we commit to learning Scripture together. Or we often text Scriptures to each other throughout the week. Scripture should be a foundation for your group.
- 2. Praying for and with your group is a non-negotiable.** My job as a small group leader is not just to prepare lessons or be hospitable or plan meetings. Another primary job is to pray for each group member, especially those you perceive as "difficult personalities". It is also the leader's job to foster prayer in the group, offering a time of prayer when you are together and reminding them to pray for each other when you are apart.
- 3. Grace-soaked conversations are key.** No one really likes conflict, but having a grace-soaked conversation proactively can prevent a tragic misunderstanding in the end. Determine to pray together and attempt to see the situation from God's perspective instead of either yours or theirs.
- 4. Praise God for that difficult person, even when you want to pull your hair out!** The antonym for criticize is praise. So when you feel like criticizing someone, break into praise over that person instead. What an opportunity to change your perspective. So many times those "difficult personalities" have become my favorite people, and so many times I've learned that I am as difficult as I perceived them to be, yet God is always patient with me.